

ISOC European Regional Bureau Newsletter

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Internet Access

EU: Mobile roaming talks end in deadlock

- This Wednesday's negotiations between the European Institutions on mobile wholesale rates did not lead to any results. Whereas the Council wants to cap data prices at 10€ per gigabyte initially, the European Parliament's Rapporteur Kumpula-Natri advocates for rates to start at 4€.
- A next round of talks is foreseen in February. The objective is to abolish roaming fees for consumers by June 2017, and the Council is aiming for a deal on wholesale rates before March to make this possible.

EU: EP Opinion on internet connectivity in local communities

- The European Parliament's Committee on Regional Development has published a draft opinion by its Italian EFDD member Rosa D'Armato on the promotion of Internet connectivity in local communities.
- The report analyses a Commission proposal amending the funding available for telecommunications through the Connecting Europe Facility to promote free internet in local communities.
- The Opinion will be taken into account by the Parliament's Committee on Industry, which is developing a report on the Commission proposal.

EU: Council confirms 700 MHz deal

- As a response to the rising demand for wireless connectivity, the Council has endorsed a deal reached with the European Parliament in December to open the 700 MHz frequency band.
- The rules lay down that EU Member States will reassign the frequency band from TV broadcasters to wireless broadband services by 30 June 2020.
- By coordinating the use of the band, the EU aims to promote the take-up of 4G and higher internet speeds and better coverage in rural areas, as well as to facilitate the roll-out of 5G.

Trust

EU: Article 29 Working Party 2017 Action Plan

- The Article 29 Working Party (29WP) has released an action plan for 2017.
- This year, the group of national privacy watchdogs will work on the production of guidelines on consent and profiling and adopt additional guidelines on transparency, portability, the DPO and the one stop shop. They will update existing opinions on data transfers to 3rd countries and on breach notifications.
- The Working Party will consult with stakeholders on all of these issues.
- Following the release of the proposed ePrivacy Regulation, the party's Chairwoman Isabelle Falque-Pierrotin raised concerns about overloading the data protection authorities with too many responsibilities. She hinted that additional resources may have to be mobilized.

EU: WhatsApp ignoring regulators' request

- In December, the Article 29 Working Party sent a [letter to WhatsApp](#), calling on the messaging application to reply to follow-up questions on its changes in privacy policy.
- So far the Working Party has not received any response, although the information was highly relevant in light of ongoing probes against the company in several Member States.

EU: Commission to solve free flow of data problem in trade agreements soon

- Trade deals such as TiSA or the EU-Japan FTA have recently been stuck amidst disagreements on how to address the free flow of data. Whereas the EU's trading partners want digital trade to be included in the agreements, the EU holds back due to data protection concerns.
- A solution might be in sight in the form of a text that links digital trade to data protection standards. The language is expected to be made public in February.
- As France strongly opposes digital trade language in FTAs, the text will have to either be approved by France or allow for its exclusion.

EU: European Cybersecurity Forum takeaways

- The Forum [published recommendations](#) based on the discussions held during the 2nd Annual Public Policy Conference on Cybersecurity, [CYBERSEC2016](#), which took place from 26 - 27 September 2016.
- As strategic priorities, the Forum has identified hybrid threats, the implementation of the NIS Directive and the preparation of the workforce for upcoming challenges in cyberspace.

EU: Public consultation on ENISA open through April

- The European Commission launched a [public consultation on ENISA](#), the EU's Agency for Network and Information Security.
- Stakeholders are [invited to submit their input](#) on the agency's performance and relevance. The results will feed into the review of the agency's mandate, which will be carried out later in 2017.

EU: Next Generation Internet Initiative and Internet Governance Week, Brussels, 23-25 January

- In light of increased cybercrime, hate speech and fake news as well as developments such as blockchain technologies, the European Commission has launched the [Next Generation Internet Initiative](#) (NGI), with the objective to deliver a clear vision of how the future internet should look like.
- To raise awareness of ongoing discussions related to the internet and to identify the key values of the EU, the Commission will bring together stakeholders during the [2017 Internet Governance Week](#).
- The event will include meetings of [Member State's experts](#), [a roundtable of experts](#) from the technical community, an [information session](#) on the NGI, and more.

EU/US: US to join court case on transatlantic data flows

- Last September, the civil rights organization [Digital Rights Ireland](#) filed a [complaint](#) against the EU-US Privacy Shield.
- The EU's General Court in Luxembourg still has to decide whether it will hear the case. However, the [US government has now requested to join the proceedings](#).
- As well as the US, Germany, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Ireland are said to be interested in intervening.

Germany: Facebook to filter fake news

- Amidst rising concerns about false stories influencing election campaigns, Facebook has said it will now apply [fake news filtering tools](#) in Germany.
- Facebook users can now report fake news, which will be sent to the third-party fact checker Correctiv. Should the news be identified as false, they will be disputed, meaning they will not be prioritized in the news feed and users will receive a warning if they decide to share.